

The hospitality in the odyssey

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In the epic, by Homer, "The Odyssey", hospitality is demonstrated at various points. It is never really genuine, but forced upon due to circumstance.

Throughout the entire epic Odysseus finds himself stranded on many islands and is greeted by a being that either dwells or has control over the island, and at one point or another they display some form of hospitality. Kyklops, Aiolos, and Kirke have self-motivated reason for showing hospitality, but never the less they are hospitable. Kyklops, a one-eyed giant that consumes humans, showed very little hospitality.

The only time that he was hospitable to Odysseus is when he was drunk, and asked Odysseus for more wine. In return for the wine, the Kyklops promised him a gift. The gift was that he would eat Odysseus last. Even though it does not seem like much of a gift, Kyklops felt like it was a great honor. The only reason that Kyklops was sociable at all was because he desired the wine and Odysseus was the only one that could bring him the wine. The act of kindness had absolutely nothing to do with the idea of being kind, it was all to gain something greater in return.

The Aiolia Island belonged to Aiolos Hipotades, the King of the wind. When Odysseus arrived he welcomed him with great hospitality, but made him stay for one month and tell him the story of his journey in great detail. Odysseus then requested that he be granted leave so that he could sail home. Aiolos Hipotades granted his leave, and upon Odysseus requests was allowed to replenish his supplies. Hipotades was extremely generous and added a bull's hide and bottled storm winds to guide his ship to Ithaca swiftly and safely.

Hippotades actions not out of generosity, but rather Odysseus had brought him news from Troy and entrained him with a great journey from the world beyond his island. The wind king enjoyed such things because he did not have access to them, and he felt he had to be extremely hospitable to Odysseus in order to repay him for the great gift that he had brought, which he could not receive any where else. They made the departure, but the bottle was accidentally opened, and they were forced back to the island. Hippotades turned them away telling them that the gods cursed their journey. The wind king was using Odysseus as a form of a newsletter.

He had no other way of knowing what was going on in the world. Once Odysseus was unable to give him what he wanted, his hospitality quickly faded. After exploring the island, and some of Odysseus' men were eaten by giants, his men came across Kirke's house. All of the men entered the house except one, Eurylochus, and Kirke turned them into pigs. Eurylochus returned to Odysseus and told him what had happened. While Odysseus traveled to Kirke's house he was visited by Hermes who gave him an amulet and had him consume a flower that would make him immune to her potion that turned men into pigs.

Upon meeting Kirke she was so impressed with Odysseus because he was immune to her poison, that she assumed he was a man of the gods, and she invited him into her bed. In return Odysseus made her swear that if he would go to bed with her that she would not be able to harm him. Kirke transformed the pigs back into men and kept Odysseus as her mate for one year. She was fixated on a more superficial way of thinking, Kirke was only

hospitable to Odysseus because of the fact that he was immune to her potion and he was man of the gods.

She was attempting to improve her status and how she felt about herself. Throughout the epic there are numerous acts of hospitality, but they all derive from an alternative motive. During this time people did not have a conventional way of knowing about other lands, so they would use the new comers as newspapers in order to know what's going on. No one does anything for anyone out of the kindness of their heart. Perhaps there is no such thing as genuine acts of hospitality.